

A TRIBUTE TO MR. OLEG
SMURYGIN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 2, 2011

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. Oleg Smurygin for his continued contribution to the health care initiatives of his community.

Mr. Smurygin was born to a middle class Jewish family to Yuriy and Bella Smurygin on April 7, 1966, in Kiev, Ukraine. He attended school in Kiev from 1973 until 1983, when he was recruited to into the army for 2 years. Mr. Smurygin served as a Sergeant in the army from 1985 until 1987 under Special Forces by the border of China, Khabarovsk City. Once Mr. Smurygin was discharged in 1987, he attended the University of Kiev, where he graduated with a Bachelors Degree in the Arts in 1991.

In 1992, Mr. Smurygin and his family decided to relocate to the United States as refugees. He supported his family working at Victory Memorial Hospital in Brooklyn, New York as a full time regular security guard. With more experience, Mr. Smurygin was promoted to shift supervisor and eventually to Director of Security in 2006. Spending over 10 years at Victory Memorial Hospital, he was awarded Victory Memorial Hospital 10-Year Award of Excellence.

When the Victory Memorial Hospital closed its doors in 2009, Mr. Smurygin headed to the PAIN Institute as a Business Manager.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the life and accomplishments of Mr. Oleg Smurygin.

OPPOSITION TO THE HOUSE INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS BILL AND UNDERLYING CUTS TO NATIONAL ENDOWMENTS FOR THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 2, 2011

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the underlying bill, and specifically the cuts it makes to the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. These entities provide support, resources and education that inspire, cultivate and foster creativity across the nation. Investing in the arts is an investment in our future, an investment in our cultural heritage as a nation, and an investment in our economy.

In my district of Sacramento, California, there are currently 1,600 arts-related businesses that employ almost 6,000 people. These businesses play an imperative role in sustaining the economic vitality of the Sacramento region.

Similarly, the non-profit arts sector is an important part of our nation's economy and the National Endowment for the Arts is uniquely positioned to fund projects and activities that preserve jobs threatened by the decline in philanthropic support as a result of the financial collapse. The non-profit arts sector generates \$166 billion annually and supports al-

most six million full-time jobs across the country.

The NEA has a 40 year proven history of investment throughout our nation, an investment that stimulates local economies, creates livable communities, and supports tourism. In fact, cultural tourism alone contributes \$192 billion annually to our country's economy.

Just this past spring, the NEA, the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission and I co-hosted a grants workshop in Sacramento providing local organizations, artists, and galleries with the information they need to apply for and win federal grants. Over 100 people attended.

I have seen firsthand the impact of NEA grants in my district. For example, in May, the NEA generously provided \$20,000 to the Sacramento Philharmonic Orchestra for their educational outreach series.

Similarly, for close to 50 years the NEH has been providing grants and opportunities for lifelong learning. In the last four years alone, the National Endowment for the Humanities has invested \$48.5 million in California institutions to preserve our cultural heritage. Yet the bill before us today cuts each of these already underfunded agencies without any regard to the effect that will have on our nation's students, museums, artists, or culture as a whole.

Both the NEA and the NEH support organizations on the local level and allow them to take their programs to the next level. In fact, for every federal dollar invested in the arts, local agencies are able to leverage seven dollars in private donations. The federal government provides the seed money and the artists, curators, and historians make it grow.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of potential amendments to make additional cuts to these agencies, and I urge my colleagues to oppose those efforts and oppose this legislation.

DICKS AMENDMENT TO H.R. 2854, THE FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2012 INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 2, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the amendment offered by Representatives DICKS, THOMPSON, FITZPATRICK, and HANABUSA to H.R. 2584, the Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. H.R. 2584 contains language that would prevent the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) from enforcing the most important parts of the Endangered Species Act. The FWS would be unable to list any new species as endangered, unable to designate as protected any habitat that is critical to species' survival, and unable to upgrade any species from threatened to endangered status.

This amendment would reverse this dangerous and short-sighted policy. It would allow the FWS to protect any of the over 260 "candidate species," species that the FWS has already determined warrant additional protection, and to upgrade the status of these species to endangered.

This amendment is not only vital for wildlife, but also for us. Many of these species play keystone roles in highly complex ecological systems on which we depend for clean water, clean air, arable soil, and healthy food. Biodiversity is a resource that can be tapped into; the complexities of organisms, only some of which have even been identified, can help us find cures for cancer and other diseases. A recent study by Dr. Felicia Kessing concluded that losses in biodiversity tend to increase the rate at which diseases are transmitted.

Willingly allowing endangered species to go extinct is irresponsible and imposes limitations on our nation's ability to progress. Species loss is forever. I urge my colleagues to support this important amendment.

STATEMENT REGARDING THE ONGOING VIOLENCE IN SYRIA

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 2, 2011

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deep concern regarding the loss of life in Syria. In Hama, the site of massive anti-regime protests, dozens of innocent citizens chanting for freedom and democracy have been ruthlessly murdered by Syrian security forces under orders from the Syrian regime led by President Bashar Assad.

This heartless attack came on the eve before the Islamic Holy Month of Ramadan, which only makes this assault on the Syrian people all the more despicable. Assad has yet again failed to understand that the Syrian people are no longer afraid. Violence will only further convince the Syrian people that Assad is no longer their legitimate president.

Assad has ruled with an iron fist for too long. During this uprising, Assad has made fake reforms designed to give the world a false impression that he is a reformer. Reports of inhumane torture of innocent men, women, and children clearly show that the last thing he is interested in is reform. The Syrian people have spoken: they want the Assad regime to fall. I therefore reiterate my call for Assad to step down, before any more innocents are murdered.

A TRIBUTE TO HOWARD KAGAN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 2, 2011

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. Howard Kagan for his support and dedication to serving Brooklyn and its youth through public advocacy and educational programs.

Mr. Kagan was born in Brooklyn, NY, and was the fifth of five children. He graduated from Brooklyn College where he received his Bachelor of Arts Degree and later received his Master of Science Degree from Brooklyn College. For several years Mr. Kagan taught English and Math at the Middle School level as he has certification in General Education and Special Education. Working in the education field, Mr. Kagan has held the responsibility of being a teacher, educator and special